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face VIII. But the story itself must, I think, be true; and rightly understood, it is singularly interesting. I say, rightly understood: for Lord Lindsay supposes the circle to have been mechanically drawn by turning the sheet of vellum under the hand, as now constantly done, for the sake of speed, at schools. But neither do Vasari's words bear this construction, nor would the drawing so made have borne the slightest testimony to Giotto's power. Vasari says distinctly, "and turning his hand" (or, as I should rather read it, "with a sweep of his hand"), not "turning the vellum;" neither would a circle produced in so mechanical a manner have borne distinct witness to anything except the draughtsman's mechanical ingenuity; and Giotto had too much common sense, and too much courtesy, to send the Pope a drawing which did not really contain the evidence he required. Lord Lindsay has been misled, also, by his own careless translation of "pennello tinto di rosso" ("a brush dipped in red,") by the word "crayon." It is easy to draw the mechanical circle with a crayon, but by no means easy with a brush. I have not the slightest doubt that Giotto drew the circle as a painter naturally would draw it; that is to say, that he set the vellum upright on the wall or panel before him, and then steadying his arm firmly against his side, drew the circular lines with one sweeping but firm revolution of his hand, holding the brush long. Such a feat as this is completely possible to a well-disciplined painter's hand, but utterly impossible to any other; and the circle so drawn was the most convincing proof Giotto could give of his decision of eye and perfectness of practice. Still, even when thus understood, there is much in the anecdote very curious. Here is a painter requested by the head of the church to execute certain religious paintings, and the only qualification for the task of which he deigns to demonstrate his possession is executive skill. Nothing is said, and nothing appears to be thought, of expression, or invention, or devotional sentiment. Nothing is required but firmness of hand. And here arises the important question; did Giotto know that this was all that was looked for by his religious patrons? and is there occult satire in the example of his Art which he sends them? or does the founder of sacred painting mean to tell us that he holds his own power to consist merely in firmness of hand, secured by long practice? I cannot satisfy myself on this point; but yet it seems to me that we may safely gather two conclusions from the words of the master—"It is enough, and more than enough." The first, that Giotto had indeed a profound feeling of the value of *precision* in all Art; and that we may use the full force of his authority to press the truth, of which it is so difficult to persuade the hasty workmen of modern times, that the difference between right and wrong lies within the breadth of a line; and that the most perfect power and genius are shown by the accuracy which disdains error, and the faithfulness which fears it. And the second conclusion is, that whatever Giotto's imaginative powers might be, he was proud to be a good *workman*, and willing to be considered by others only as such.

(To be continued.)

### "LA MODE" IN HER BIRTH-PLACE.

Chacun à sa mode, et les âges à l'ancienne.

MONISH PROVERB.

THE Honorable James Howard, in the year 1764, wrote a sprightly comedy, entitled "The English Monsieur." The hero is an individual who sees nothing English that is not execrable. An English meal is poison, and an English coat degradation. He once challenged a tasteless individual who had praised an English dinner; and, says the *English Monsieur*, "I ran him through his mistaken palate, which made me think the hand of justice guided my sword." He can tell whether English or French ladies have passed along the moist road before him, by the impressions that they leave.

"I have often," he remarks, "in France, observed in gardens, when the company used to walk after a small shower of rain, the impression of the French ladies' feet. I have seen such *bonne mine* in their footsteps, that the King of France's *maître de danse* could not have found fault with any one tread amongst them all. In this walk," he adds, "I find the toes of English ladies ready to tread upon one another."

Subsequently our "English Monsieur" quarrels with a friend, because he had found fault with "a pair of French tops" worn by the Philogallist, and which were so noisy when the wearer moved in them, that the other's mistress could not hear a word of the love made to her. The wearer justifies the noise as a fashionable French noise; "for look you, Sir, a French noise is agreeable to the air, and therefore not unagreeable, and therefore not prejudicial to the hearing; that is to say, to a person who has seen the world." The slave of Gallomania even finds comfort, when his own mistress rejects him, in the thought that "'twas a denial with a French tone of voice, so that 'twas agreeable!" and when she bids him a final adieu, he remarks to a friend, "Do you see, Sir, how she leaves us? she walks away with a French step."

Such was the early allegiance rendered even in this country to the authority of France in the matters of "Mode," of that ever-variable queen, of whom a French writer himself has despairingly said, that she is the despot of ladies and fops; "*La mode est le tyran des femmes et des fats.*"

But Paris is the focus of insurrection, and Fashion itself has had to endure many a rebellious assault. Never was rebellion more determined than that carried on against towering plumes.

In Paris, feathers and head-dress extended so outrageously, both in a vertical and a horizontal direction, that a row of ladies in the pit stalls, or in the front row of the boxes, effectually barred the "spectacle" from an entire audience in the rear. The fashion was suppressed by a Swiss, who was as well known in the Paris theatres as the celebrated critical trunk-maker once was in our own galleries. The Swiss used to attend, armed with a pair of scissors; and when he found his view obstructed by the head-dresses in front, he made a demonstration of cutting away all the superfluous portions of the head-dresses which interfered with his enjoyment. At first, the result was that the ladies made way for him, and he obtained a front place; but overcome by his obstinate warfare they at length hauled down their top-knots, and by yielding defeated the Swiss,—for he never got a front place afterwards.

I will take the liberty of adding here, that the fans used by Queen Elizabeth were usually made of feathers, and were as large as a modern hand fire-screen, with all sorts of devices thereon, such as would have singularly delighted an astronomical Chinese philosopher. Sir Francis Drake gave her one of this description, and she used to leave fans of a similar description at

country houses as memorials of her visits; as, for instance, when she left Hawstead Hall, she dropped her silver-handled fan into the moat. Happy of course was the lucky man who got it thence. But to get back to France.

As England had its "macaronies," its "bloods," its "bucks," its "dandies," and its "exquisites," so France had its "*hommes à bonnes fortunes*," its "*petits-maîtres*," its "importuns," its "*élégans*," and last of all, its "lions." With us, variety of names scarcely indicated variety of species; the "macaroni" and the "exquisite" were simply the fast and fashionable men of their respective times; their titles were conferred by the people, not arrogated by themselves.

It was otherwise with our neighbors. The "*hommes à bonnes fortunes*" assumed the appellation, and therewith became the terror of fathers and husbands. His glory was to create a "scandal"—to be ever mixed up with the coeteries of the women, and to be for ever fighting the men. Compared with him, the "importuns," who took the Duc de Beaufort for their Magnus Apollo, and the "*petits-maîtres*," who swore by their great master, the Prince de Condé, were simply harmless fops.

The "elegant" was the first of the butterfly race who exhibited a calmness of bearing. He smiled rather than answered, when spoken to; never gazed at his reflection in a glass, but concentrated his looks upon his own proper person. He was in a continual calm ecstasy at the sight of so charming a doll, so admirably dressed.

"The 'elegant,'" says Mercier, "pays visits of not more than a quarter of an hour's duration. He no longer proclaims himself the 'friend of the duke,' the 'lover of the duchess,' or the 'indispensable man at little suppers.' He speaks of the retirement in which he lives, of the chemistry which he studies, of his distaste for the great world. He lets others speak; and while they speak, an almost imperceptible smile of derision flutters on his lips. He is dreaming while he listens to you. He does not noisily leave a room, but glides out of it; and a quarter of an hour after he has quitted you, he writes you a note, as if he had not seen you for months, just to show you that he is an absent man."

The "elegant" was not without his uses. He brought down superlativism. Exaggeration of speech and of dress went out as he came in. This change extended to female as well as male society. He rendered social intercourse however a difficulty for intellectual men. The latter had indeed no difficulty in talking of science with the wise, of knowledge with the learned, of war with the soldier, and of dogs and horses with the nobles; but he did find a difficulty in talking about nothing with those fashionable women who cared only for the subject most patronized by the "elegant."

What dreadful guys were the French children of the middle of the last century! Their monkeys, who danced upon cords, for the edification of the *grande nation*, were not more ridiculous. Fancy a boy seven years old: his head was powdered profusely, and between his little shoulders hung the wide tie or bag of his hair. Therewith he wore a full-sleeved and broad-skirted coat, immense ruffles, a cocked hat, not on his head—it was not big enough for that—but beneath his arm; and upon his tobacco-pipe of a thigh there hung a needle of a sword! And this young old man could hold himself erect, could bow like a judge, and was kept lean by late hours. He had, in the common acceptance of the words, neither wrists, arms, nor legs of his own. He seemed jointless, but he had been taught how to sit down, and how to walk a minuet.

Mercier groans over the contrast between French and English boys of this period. Take, he says, a little Gallic monseigneur to London,

and introduce him to the son of a lord, a boy of his own age. What does he see? Clean, fair, and long flowing hair; the skin pure and healthy; the head unmolested by a peruke; the body supple and robust. The little Frenchman might be sulky thereat, but he found consolation in his gold-laced embroidery. He thinks to make an impression on the other boy by his profound bows, at which the English lad laughs; and when, according to the French custom, the little monseigneur advances to embrace the youthful Briton, the latter skips off, with the exclamation, that they wanted to take him in by pretending to introduce him to a playfellow, which proved to be only a monkey.

In modern days France has become more than ever the locality where the Popess Fashion is enthroned, and whose slipper is reverently kissed by a devoted world. Parenthetically may I say that the custom of kissing the Pontiff's slipper arose from the time when one of the Leos, having been offended by an act of one of his fingers, cut it off, and in his strange humility would no longer permit his hand to be saluted by the faithful. That was a queer cause for a strange fashion; but it rests on legendary authority. In France causes as strange, sometimes more and sometimes less pleasant, have fixed the fashion of the hour. Last century—that is to say, during something more than the traditional "nine days" of that century—the rage in Paris was for pantaloons made, from aloes, the color of a lady's finger-nails, between rosy tint and delicate blue.

France not only gave the fashion for fine dresses, but also prescribed how people should visit in them. It was in Paris, about the year 1770, that was introduced the custom of visiting *en blanc*, as it was called; that is, by leaving a card. The old ladies and gentlemen who loved to show their costume, called this fashion fantastic; but it has its advantages, and, though sometimes anti-social, is perhaps generally less so than it at first sight appears. Society would often gain nothing by the closer contact of individuals.

There was wit however in many of the modish inventions of the Parisians. Here is an instance. La Harpe was the vainest of men, and the most unfortunate of authors. His pieces were invariably failures; but he used to speak of their success with as little regard to truth as the Czar Nicholas and his Muscovite "gentlemen" show, when, being thoroughly well beaten, they go and outrage Heaven with thanks for a victory. La Harpe's tragedy of "Les Barmécides" was hissed off the stage; but he complacently pattered about its merits. He was one day riding in the Bois de Boulogne with the Duchess de Grammont and another lady, when a man was heard calling for sale "Cannes à la Barmécide." La Harpe rapturously summoned him to the carriage-door, at the request of the Duchess, who wished to make him a present of a walking-stick à la Barmécide, in celebration of the success achieved by his tragedy. "But why do you call your canes à la Barmécide?" said La Harpe. "I will show you," said the man; and taking off the ivory head, he pointed to a whistle within, warranted to be shrill of note, and which the vendor pronounced to be very useful to owners of good dogs, and hissing of bad tragedies. La Harpe could have shed "tears of bile," says Beaumarchais; and, what was worse, the story got abroad, and the tailors profited by it, and sporting vests with a little pocket to carry a whistle, were immediately named "vestes à la Barmécide."

What the Bourse and Royal Exchange are to the magnates of the commercial world, the Temple in Paris is (and Rag Fair and Houndsditch in London are or have been) to the dealers in the cast-off skins, if we may so speak, of glittering metropolitan and other snakes. It is

especially at Paris that the commerce of renovated ancient garments (*dix-huits*, as they are sometimes called, because *deux fois neuf*) is carried on with eagerness.

It is to the Temple that the correct comedian runs who would fain discover the proper type of a lost mode of the last century.

Many a royal garment has been carried off from the Temple to the theatres. The former place is most crowded about eleven in the morning. All the *marchands d'habits* in Paris assemble there at that hour, laden with the purchases which they have made during the early part of the day; and these purchases are immediately resold to the stationary dealers in the rotunda, who divide the same according to their respective merits and expected customers.

One of the best-dressed men in France under the Empire was General Dorsenne. "Look at Dorsenne," Napoleon would say, on the day of battle; "he looks like the true type of a French general, while Murat has the air of a rider from Franconi's."

Dorsenne was about to set out for the campaign in Prussia. He was the possessor of a tasteful but brilliant uniform, which he was desirous of exhibiting as closely as possible to the enemy, and which he intended to wear at the balls at Berlin. It was duly packed up; and Dorsenne, who was to set out on the morrow, took it into his head to pay a visit in the evening to the Théâtre de la Gaîté, where they play such melancholy melodramas, in order to see the somewhat celebrated actor Tautain in one of his military characters. The first act passed off well enough; but in the second Tautain appeared in the full uniform of a general. Dorsenne was astonished; he put up his glass, recognized his property on Tautain's back, and exploding with wrath, he cried to his aide-de-camp:—

"Arrest that rascal; take him to the corps-de-garde; I will be there as soon as you; he has stolen my coat."

The piece was interrupted: four soldiers escorted Tautain to the neighboring "poste," and there stood the General as scarlet as Major Bagstock.

"Where did you steal that coat, you wretched mountebank?" exclaimed Dorsenne.

"I am neither a thief nor mountebank," said Tautain, who was pale with rage and fright; "I bought it not two hours ago at the Temple."

When the affair was examined into, Dorsenne's valet turned out to be the thief. The latter was punished as he merited; and the General, leaving his coat, lace, and epaulettes to the comedian, went through the campaign in an old uniform and with his accustomed success.—*Habits and Men.*

#### HOME ARTS.

*From the Independent.*

THOSE happy ones among us whom leisure and wealth permit to ramble in foreign lands during certain golden hours of their lives, seldom fail to bring home tokens from the pleasant places they have visited in their wanderings. Vases and dishes of spar from English Derbyshire, boxes and trays in wood mosaic from Tunbridge Wells, shawls and cairngorms from Scotland, Irish mosses and sea-weeds, carved wood from Switzerland, agate ornaments from Germany, the ruby and azure glass of Bohemia, the corals of Naples, with the scarfs and mosaics of Rome and Florence. Many of these beautiful things our readers must have seen, especially of late, since, owing to the increase of travel, they are no longer rare.

We have mentioned only a few of these manufactures peculiar to certain places, and always as-

sociated with them in the minds of travellers. The list might easily be lengthened, but those we have named are sufficient for our present purpose. That purpose is comparatively an humble one, but we believe that if it were once carried out to any considerable extent, it could not fail to be useful in itself, and in the end to lead to something higher.

We have often heard foreigners regret that they can find in our shops no pretty trifles whose manufactures are peculiar to our people or to certain districts and towns visited in their travels, which they can carry back with them as remembrancers, or as specimens of the skill and industry of the inhabitants. Neither could they easily obtain engraved views of the many beautiful and notable passages of natural scenery which were a delight to their eyes while here, and which they would gladly have been able to recall when at home, by a sketch, however slight, procured upon the spot.

The traveller in Europe meets with no such difficulty. Almost every town of any importance has some manufacture by which it is distinguished, and which from its beauty or utility, or from its happy union of both, meets with a ready sale. And we know a gentleman who spent some time in Europe, who has an album containing engraved views of all the places he visited, even the smallest, and of the principal objects of interest in those places. It is these collections of curiosities, and the abundance of these engraved memoranda, in great measure, which make up the idea of Europe in the minds of us who sit at home. My friend brings me a stone from Venice or Verona, and I put it on my mantel-piece, where it soon becomes a marvel, and is no longer a mere stone, but the germ of poems and conversations. This is because everything that comes from Europe is European, is individual and characteristic; each smallest hamlet says, "What can I give to these travellers that they may remember me," and immediately the Swiss peasant brings out the wood that in his leisure he has carved into fantastic or useful shapes; the rough Bohemian offers his gorgeous glass, whose ruby and azure treasure fore ver the sunset and noon of that romantic region; the fishermen of Naples stretch out their bronzed hands, dripping with the water of their sacred bay, and filled with rarest corals, red, white or rose; or the mild-eyed Turk, smiling from out the smoke that fills his musk-perfumed bazaar, bargains dreamily with you for embroidered slippers, flasks of attar, and muslins whose web is only woven moonlight.

"Very well," says the crusty reader—alas! that we must take some crusty readers for granted—"Very well! You surely don't intend to advise our people to devote any of their time to making such gew-gaws as you have been describing. To buy them or to covet them, is little less than folly, and beside, if it were not, we have as much as we can do with electing Presidents, making steam-engines, and laying our telegraph wires across the bed of the Atlantic ocean, without busying ourselves with such small matters as ear-rings and boxes. Moreover, so far as we see, this subject has no connection with that of the Fine Arts. We should like to hear something profound about 'the schools.'"

The crusty gentleman must have patience with us, for it is our purpose to advise those of our readers whom it may concern, to look about them, and try if they cannot find some unemployed resources lying within reach which might be improved and made of profit. That some such occupations are needed, both by men and women, there can be no doubt whatever. We ourselves have known girls, whose situation in life forbade their going out to service, and who rebelled against the idea of becoming sewing drudges, yet who felt the necessity of an occupation by which they could earn their own support. We have known boys who steadily re-